



2017 Missouri Clean Diesel Program Funded Early Replacements of School Buses

Eight Missouri school districts received partial funding for new cleaner-burning buses through the 2017 Missouri Clean Diesel Program. Four districts purchased two buses sooner than their budgets allowed, and four districts purchased one bus each. The school districts received up to 25 percent of the cost of each new bus with a maximum award of \$18,000 per bus. To ensure improvement in air quality, recipients had to disable their old diesel engines. The department administered the clean diesel program for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which allocated funding through the U.S. Diesel Emissions Reduction Act.

The 2017 endeavor marked the third year in a row that the department's Air Pollution Control Program focused on early replacements of school buses. Reducing diesel emissions is vital to the department's mission of protecting public health. The program's main benefactors are schoolchildren, an especially sensitive group. Children have respiratory and immune systems that are still developing. Asthma accounts for more school absenteeism and emergency room visits by children than any other chronic disease.

Diesel emissions contain particle pollution and precursors of ground-level ozone. Particle pollution can penetrate people's lungs by breaching natural defenses, leading to respiratory ailments. Ground-level ozone is the pollutant of most concern across Missouri; it aggravates asthma and other diseases. Missouri currently has several areas that violate or come close to violating EPA's national standard for ground-level ozone. EPA sets a standard for the ambient air concentration of ground-level ozone to protect public health and the environment.

The early replacement programs for school buses have given some communities an unforeseen bonus. Before disabling the engines of old buses, a few districts have offered them to area firefighters for hands-on training. Firefighters practice creating openings to extricate passengers in case of an emergency.

| Selected School Districts | Number of Buses Replaced |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Worth County R-III School District | 1 bus |
| Branson R-IV School District | 2 buses |
| Carl Junction R-I School District | 2 buses |

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|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Gasconade County R-II School District | 2 buses |
| Hannibal Public School District #60 | 1 bus |
| Raytown C-2 School District | 1 bus |
| Central R-III School District | 2 buses |
| De Soto School District #73 | 1 bus |